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ABSTRACT

During the past five years there has been new research into the teaching of history to children. Many educators are advocating once again the teaching of history through concepts. This elementary school unit uses the concept approach to teaching history. The lesson examines the concept of war and wars' impact on the lives of a variety of people. The lesson's approach contrasts with and provides a balance to the fears and triumphs of leaders of nations who seek to preserve or extend their own economic and political power. The lesson provides identification with the impact of war rather than an attempt to create a set of heroes. It identifies eight knowledge objectives (such as defining war, explaining war's destruction, and making conclusions about the impact of war), four skills objectives, (including gathering and analyzing data), and four attitudinal objectives. A list of materials needed for the unit and trade books to be read is given. The lesson then presents a day-by-day description of classroom procedures and activities. It concludes with a list of formative and formal assessments. (BT)

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TEACHING ABOUT WAR TO HELP CREATE A MORE HUMANE WORLD

A ten day unit for elementary social studies

Incorporating The Social Studies Standards of:
Time, Continuity, and Change
Civic Ideas and Practices
People, Places, and Environments
Global Connections
Science, Technology and Society
Culture

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting
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TEACHING ABOUT WAR TO HELP CREATE A MORE HUMANE WORLD

Mary E. Haas

Rationale:

Traditionally the history of the United States has been taught to its citizen through the use of textbooks. Movies, seen in theaters on television or schools, have also become an important teaching tool in the study of history. All teaching materials, but especially textbooks and films, suffer from problems in their coverage. Time and space limit what can be included and so writers make decisions about what to include and what to eliminate. In addition, telling the events on film requires the existence of picture records or the reenactment of events to obtain visual images. Pictures can not only be edited in the production process, but limits to the eye of the lens excludes materials that a real eye sees and can distort other portion of a picture. Both films and textbooks portray history as a story which is a way to teach history advocated by some individual in the phrase a "story well told." While story telling is an ancient art and has been used to pass on the lessons of life within cultures for thousands of years, it is not a procedure for the teaching critical examination of facts or examining multiple perspectives or views on events

Historians take pride is searching for the truth and continue to challenge it through the discovery of more evidence whose meaning they must then interpret and add to peoples existing knowledge and understanding of history. In the past twenty years historians have searched new sources for information and have used technology to better be able to read and hear existing data. New interpretations and methods of working have been created and the traditional interpretation methods of history have been impacted by the new findings and have broadened searches and academic practices. No longer are the major sources of data those controlled by governments and economically powerful groups. The views of the common people have become acceptable sources and governments have opened their complete files to researchers. The result has been a great increase in the amount of social history available to people. However, getting this new knowledge into a general history book that is already too long to cover in a school year and overcoming the political problems related to including newer interpretations of events has resulted in little change in the historical knowledge of most textbooks and therefore, little change in what is taught about history in the schools.

In the past five years there has been new research into the teaching of history to children and youth. What has been learned challenges many of the old view on how to teach history. Research into how chronology is learned has provided interesting results. Younger children do have a sense of chronology in that they know the old from the new and that they can often place artifacts into time periods, but they do not interpret chronology in terms of dates or numbers. Instead they examine many characteristics which they group together and then place in a sequence based upon changes in the artifacts compared to their present day appearance. Researchers who

reports that even honors students in high school who are formally operational interpret history in ways very different from that of the professional historian. Grouping by characteristics is the process of learning concepts. Therefore, those educators who have advocated the teaching of history through concepts are once again receiving support for their methods for studying history. Experienced teachers have long known that young children are capable of learning great amounts of information about particular historical time periods and show great interest in learning about the lives of the various people of other time periods. The lesson presented here uses the concept approach to teaching history. It examines the concept of war and wars' impact on the lives of a variety of people. This approach contrasts with and provides a balance to the fears and triumphs of leaders of nations who seek to preserve or extend their own economic and political power with its abilities to support their comfort lifestyle. The promotion of a more humane world using a social history approach allows the child to learn the reality of war and its consequences on the lives of the common people not just the leaders of nations. It provides a more likely identification with the impact of war than does an attempt to create a set of heroes who are used to promote an abstract and limited view and interpretation of the struggles of a small portion of the people whose lives are impacted by a war. In the process students come to face the moral dilemmas that war creates and are asked to evaluate the entire costs of warfare. To end the study teachers have children research the local and current impact of their historical conclusions to illustrate that study of history has an impact on the lives and activities of people living today and that people do have opportunities to modify or change historical trends through their own actions.

Knowledge Objectives:

1. Define war as an organized and violent conflict between nations or in the case of civil war groups within a single nation over who has the right to govern a country or region.
2. Students explain that warfare is destructive to the property of people living in the area where the war is fought.
3. Students conclude that the outcome of war includes killing some soldiers and civilians and severely changing the lives of civilian men, women, and children and those soldiers who survive.
4. Students give examples of how the physical injuries and the mental traumas sustained in warfare impact surviving soldiers and civilians for many years.
5. Students identify as war heroes individuals who help people and act humanely and respectful toward other people.
6. Students conclude that war is something that people and governments should try very hard to prevent.
7. Students explain how warfare causes people to become refugees, to migrate and to become immigrates.
8. Students research organizations and individuals who work today to reduce wars and their impacts on the lives of people.

Skill Objectives:

1. Gather data from pictures, art work and written accounts.

2. Analyze and interpret the meaning of the pictures a id works of art.
3. Form conclusions about the impact and consequences of war on the lives of people.
4. Research using letter writing, Internet, and interviews to learn of local present day connections to the topic of study.

Attitudinal objectives:

1. Students will come to view heroism in war as not limited to victorious soldiers and politicians but something that is shared by many people on all sides.
2. Students will respect people who have experienced warfare for their power of endurance.
3. Students will come to believe that warfare is something that people and governments should cooperate and work hard to prevent happening in the future.
4. Students will want to help people whose lives have been impacted by warfare.

Materials: Pictures of the American Civil War from American History textbooks and from the collection of The Library of Congress available from their web site (http://www.loc.gov). The mosaic of Abraham Lincoln's head can also be used and is a good source of typical pictures of the time.

Trade Books: 1. Polacco, Patricia. PINK AND SAY. New York: Philomel Books. 1994.
2. Bereckler, Rosemary. SWEET DRIED APPLES. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1996.
3. Cha, Dia. DIA'S STORY CLOTH. New York: Lee and Low Books Inc. 1996.

Chart paper and various colored marking pens.

Procedures:

Day 1: Exploration of the students' understanding of the concept of war at the beginning of the lesson:

Given their own memory and a set of pictures of the American Civil War from the Library of Congress or from American History textbooks, students describe what they believe to be the characteristics of a war.

In small groups students look at several pictures from the collection of The Library of Congress about the civil war and discuss what the pictures tell them about war. Following their group discussions students share their ideas in a whole class discussion. Teacher asks: "Judging from your pictures what kinds of things did your group decide happened in the Civil War?" "From what you see in the pictures who or what kinds of people were involved in the Civil War?" "What messages did these pictures tell you either directly on indirectly about what things happened to the people in the pictures?" (Record the students answers on a chart titled "People and Events of War." (Keep this chart and add to or cross out or put question marks next to ideas each day after reading and discussing each of the three stories. Use a different color marking pen for each day.)

Closure Day 1: Call attention to what is on the chart and continue by asking: "Whose involvement in the war was not commemorated in the pictures?" "Why might photographers have not taken pictures of the old people, women and children or the Library of Congress not preserved their pictures?" "Do you think that these other

people had the same views toward the war as did the soldiers and politicians whose pictures we have seen?" "How can we find out what happened to the slaves, wives, families, and farmers and factory workers during the war?" Students recognize that the pictures present one view of the war and suggest that diaries, biographies, letters, and newspapers may have other views.

We will keep our chart and see if we want to change it as we study more about warfare and it impact on people.

Development of lesson concepts

Day 2: Given the reading and discussion of the trade book PINK AND SAY by Patricia Polacco, students examine the impact of the American Civil War on two young men and their families.

Recall that yesterday students examined pictures of the U. S. Civil War. "What do you recall seeing in the pictures?"

Inform students that you will be reading them a book today that also takes place during the U. S. Civil War. Show class the cover of PINK AND SAY and ask: " What are the young men or boys pictured on the cover doing." "What does this picture lead you to believe about the young men?" Accept and record the students' predictions. Ask for clarification of student comments as needed. On a map of the U. S. locate Michigan and Georgia. The events of the book too place in the state of Georgia.

Read the book aloud to the students and show the pictures. Ask students to comment on the scenes portrayed by the illustrator as you read the book. When you finish reading the book say, "Think back at the pictures we saw and identify one of the pictures that remains in your memory. Tell me what is in the picture and what message the picture gives to you." Have several students share their picture choices. Tell the class, "Think about the picture you personally remember the most from the story or the picture that first comes to your mind, raise your hand if the picture could be described as happy." Count and record the responses. "How many of you remembered or thought first of a picture that could be described as sad?" Count and record responses. Ask the students to vote on whether they think the story was sad or happy. Record this vote.

Discuss with the students the following questions:

The book provides a few hints of what the lives of Pink, Mo Mo Bay and Say were like before the war.

1. What do you think the lives of Pink and Mo Mo Bay were like before the war?
2. What do you think the life of Say was like before the war?
3. What happened to Pink, Say, and Mo Mo Bay during the war?
4. Describe how Mo Mo Bay felt about Pink and Say? What evidence is there in the story that supports the truth of your description?
5. Pink and Say have feelings about the war. What do their feelings have in common? How are they different?
6. Why was touching Mr. Lincoln s hand "something important"?
7. What was the last request Pink made of Say? What do you think was the

significance of this request and the actions of the two boys?
8. Why do you think Pinkus Aylee was killed within hours of entering Andersonville Prison and Sheldon (Say) Curtis was not?
9. Whom do you think was the hero of the story?
What did Mo Mo Bay do that was heroic?
What did Pink do that was heroic?
What did Say do that was heroic?

Make a list of the words that describe Pinkus Aylee (Pink)
Make a list of words that describe Sheldon Curtis (Say)
Make a list of words that describe the marauders

Closure for Day 2: Yesterday we looked at some pictures of the American Civil War and recorded what those pictures told us about the people who took part in the American Civil War and the events that took place. Today the story PINK AND SAY related the memory of one soldier of the American Civil War passed on orally to us through several generations of his family. Display the list from Day 1. Ask: "Are there any statements on our list that you think we should remove from the list at this time? (If so, cross them out, if there is a debate about any statement put a question mark beside it.) "Are there any new statements you think we should we add to our list that tell us important things about the people and events of the war?"

Day 3: Given the story of SWEET DRIED APPLES, students will identify the impact of the Vietnam War on the lives of a Vietnamese family. Students will define the words immigration and migration and tell how they are a part of the story.

On a map or globe locate Vietnam, the location of the story being read, and the U. S. Indicate to the children that following the war many people from Vietnam did come to the U.S. and that many of them settled in California. This story by Rosemary Breckler is based upon a true story of her friend who migrated from Vietnam.

Read the story showing the pictures and asking student to comment on selected pictures especially on how illustrator showed the expressions on the faces and asking students to predict what expressions might be on the faces of the people when the illustrator shows us the backs of the people instead of their faces.

Review the events of the story through a discussion of the following questions:
1. What was daily life like for the children before the war?
2. Little is said of what life was it like for the adults, but judging from the pictures and the few words, how would you describe the lives of the adults prior to the war?
3. What were the first observable signs of the war the children in the story encountered?
4. What things did grandfather, Ong Noi, do for the children and family?
5. How would you describe the relationship between the children and Ong Noi? Are there any similarities between the things Ong Noi did with his grandchildren and

the things you do with your grandfather?

6. Why do you think Ong Noi did not smile when he told the children, "You must never wander from home!"

7. While grandfather was gone what did the children do as a surprise for their grandfather? Why do you think the children thought this would be a good idea?

8. How was their village attacked during the war?

9. In the morning following the attack what was grandfather's concern and what did he do?

10. What happened to grandfather?

11. What happened to the members of the village?

12. The book does not tell us what happened to Ba. Ask several different students, " What do you think most likely happened to him? Why do you think this is the case?" Have class vote with a show of hands on the predictions of the different responders and record their votes on the board.

13. What do you think happened to the people who reached the large boat?

14. Why do you think the girl promised herself that she would return and do several things for Ong Noi?

15. Who in this story do you think is a hero and why do you think that is the case?

Ask the children if they have ever heard the words migration or immigrant. Define the words if needed and explain that when the girl and her family left their home in Vietnam they became migrants and when they entered the U. S. they were called immigrants. Many people have come to the U. S. as immigrants because of wars. Ask students in the class, "Can you name the nation from which one or more of your ancestors migrated when they came to the U. S.?" Record the responses on the board. Ask: "Do you know of anyone in the community who came to the U. S. from Vietnam?" "When a person migrates what do they leave behind?" "Why do you think more people would be willing to migrate during a war or just after a war?"

Closure for Day 3: Display the list from Days 1 & 2. Read the list of statements. Ask: "Are there any statements on our list that you think we should remove from the list at this time? (If so, cross them out, if there is a debate about any statement put a question mark beside it.) "Are there any new statements you think we should we add to our list that tell us important things about the people and events of the war?"

Day 4: Given the book DIA'S STORY CLOTH, students will trace the migration of the Hmong people and describe the lives of the Hmong during in this migration period.

Ask the students, "What book did we read yesterday?" and "What happened to the family in the book?" Tell the students that the book they will hear today records events in a neighboring country during the same time period and the same war discussed in SWEET DRIED APPLES. "As we read this book think about ways this story is similar and different from yesterday's story." Ask: " If I asked you to record the events of a trip how would you do it, what means would you use to record the events?" The Hmong people have long recorded events important to them on a piece

of cloth. Show the picture in the center of the book of the entire cloth. Ask: "What is your first impression of this cloth?" Have students identify one or two events recorded on the cloth. Read the names of the nations on the cloth. Using a map or globe locate these various nations where the Hmong people lived China, Laos, Burma, and Thailand also trace the course of the Mekong River and show it divides the nations flows through Vietnam. Explain that the author of the book immigrated to the U. S. where she lives today and that the journey of her ancestors who are Hmong people began in China and they migrated to the various nations mentioned on the cloth. This cloth is a history book of her people and family.

After reading the text of the book and examining the pictures, ask students the following questions:

1. Why have the Hmong people lived in so many different places?
2. What was the life of the Hmong people like before the war in Laos?
3. How were the lives of the Hmong people changed by the war?
4. Could the Hmong men have avoided fighting in the war?
5. How are the actions of a guerrilla soldier different from those of a regular soldier?
6. What happened to Dia's father? (The family does not know.)
7. What were the members of Dia's family forced to do to keep from being killed?
8. Hmong means "free people." In what ways do you think the Hmong people were free before the war?
9. Do you think the word "free" described the Hmong when they got to Thailand?
10. What did Dia's family get in the refugee camp in Thailand that helped them to eventually migrate to the U. S.?
11. What were some of the problems Dia and the Hmong people had to overcome in the U. S.?
12. Is there anyone in this book you think is a hero?

All of the events described in the narrative are shown on the cloth. Examine the cloth again:

1. Making the cloth is a family undertaking. Review how the men contribute to the cloth's making and how the women contribute.
2. Locate the different events and tell what was happening to the families in these different situations.
3. What weapons of war are shown on the cloth? Which weapon do you think were them most destructive? Why?
4. What is the importance of the story cloth to Dia and her family, to you and other Americans who are Hmong?
5. Make a list of words that describe the cloth. Compare this list with the first comments about the cloth. Ask: "How has the explanation of the cloth and the detailed observation changed our description of the cloth and our thoughts about the cloth?" "What does the cloth tell us about the impact of war on people?"

6. In what ways are the presentation of the war on Dia's cloth different from what we saw in the pictures of the American Civil War? " Who or what kinds of people were involved?" "What does the cloth tell you happened to the people?"

Closure for Day 4. Display the list from Days 1 & 2. Read the list of statements. Ask "Are there any statements on our list that you think we should remove from the list at this time? (If so, cross them out, if there is a debate about any statement put a question mark beside it.) "Are there any new statements you think we should we add to our list to tell us important things about the people and events of the war?"

Read over the final list of statements about war, post these on a bulletin board and ask the children to draw pictures to frame the poster that illustrate what they have concluded about war and its impact upon people.

Days 5 - 10: Students review what they have learned through the study and books by completing a bulletin board and organize themselves to research groups and people who work to prevent or alleviate the impact of war on people.

Add students' pictures on the bulletin board leaving room at the top for a title. Call attention to the bulletin board and ask: "In making a bulletin board about war a teacher or class could have just used the pictures about war from the textbooks or downloaded from the Library of Congress. How is our bulletin board different because we included ideas learned from reading the three books?" (Affirm the idea that wars greatly impact the lives and property of civilians as well as soldiers and governments and that we need to hear what happened from the civilian population as well as the government to understand the real impact wars have.)

"We need a title for our bulletin board that tells in just a few words the message about what we have learned about wars and their impacts. Does anyone have an idea for a title?" (List suggested titles and vote on a title for the board. Post selected title to complete the bulletin board.)

Tell children that one of the wars, WWI, was the war that many people said would be, " The war to end all wars." However, after WWI came WWII and many other international wars and civil wars. Since people have not been able to end warfare, many people have tried to reduce the number of wars that take place and to help those people who were injured or like Dia and her family or the Vietnamese family had to migrate and became refugees or immigrants. For some people this work becomes their job and for others an important voluntary activity in their lives while some people help out with donations of money or by giving a small amount of their time.

Working in small groups have students research organizations such as the UN, United Nations Commission for Refugees, Doctors Without Borders, International Red Cross, and religious, charities, and veterans groups that work to help people whose lives have been impacted by war. Research the winners of the Nobel Prize for Peace who have worked to stop wars. Localize the study by finding out if local people have worked in these efforts or if the community now has residents who were forced to flee other nations and immigrated to the U.S. Invite these individuals to share their stories

with the class. Make a second bulletin board to include articles or pictures of those trying to bring relief to people whose lives have been impacted by wars today. Arrange to take part in helping people through one of the organizations and write those in political office who might be able to stop warfare and wars. Students can also write thank you letters directly to individuals and organizations that they learn about.

ASSESSMENTS:

Formative assessments include.

Students answer the factual questions from the readings correctly.

Students make logical predictions and give logical reasons to questions seeking explanations.

Student look for details in the pictures and in the picture of Dia's cloth asking questions for clarification of things they do not recognize or understand.

Students actively and cooperatively work in groups when asked to do so. They begin promptly and continue on task throughout the allotted time period.

Students respectfully share views and ask students to clarify their thoughts and use evidence to support their statements.

Students search for sources of data through such methods as writing and phoning local groups, doing Internet searches and library searches.

Students politely contact people to gain information.

Students listen to guest speakers and other students and express an appreciation for the news information they gain in this way.

Formal assessments include.

Students make drawings for the bulletin board reflecting what they have learned in the study.

Students write letters to individuals expressing what they have learned about the impact of war and their views about its importance to the lives and actions of people.